

## **What causes the X-ray flares in eta Car?**

Anthony F.J. Moffat<sup>1</sup> , Michael F. Corcoran<sup>2</sup>

1 - Universite de Montreal

2 - NASA/GSFC

We examine the rapid variations in X-ray brightness (“flares”) assumed to arise in the hard X-ray emitting wind-wind collision zone (WWCZ) of eta Car, as seen during the past three orbital cycles by RXTE. Among the plausible scenarios (1. multi-scale stochastic wind clumps entering the WWCZ, 2. large-scale corotating interacting regions in the wind sweeping across the WWCZ, or 3. instabilities intrinsic to the WWCZ), only the first one appears to be consistent with the observations.